## AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

Please replace the claims, including all prior versions, with the listing of claims below.

LISTING OF CLAIMS:

Claims 1-18 (Canceled)

19. (Currently amended) A method for switching a connection between subscribers of a communications network including a common signaling channel that carries a control signal for controlling a call function, information channels independent from the common signaling channel for carrying at least voice data, a transit exchange comprising at least one switching network and associated line trunk groups, the switching being effected at a request of an external communication network, the method comprising:

permanently connecting two inputs corresponding to information channels of respective line trunk groups to another, thereby allocating the information channels to each other;

transmitting a control signal on the common signalling channel indicating that a connection to a first subscriber of the communications network is switched through a first information channel of the information channels; and

transmitting a control signal on the common signalling channel indicating that a connection to a second subscriber of the communications network is switched through a second information channel of the information channels.

20. (Previously presented) The method according to claim 19, further comprising:

forwarding terminal signalling of the connection to the first subscriber to the connection to the second subscriber over the common signalling channel.

21. (Previously presented) The method according to claim 19, further comprising:

signalling on the common signalling channel in accordance with ITU-T Signalling System No. 7.

22. (Previously presented) The method according to claim 19, further comprising:

signalling messages between the connection and the first subscriber to the connection of the second subscriber in accordance with ITU-T Signalling System No. 7.

23. (Previously presented) The method according to claim 19, further comprising:

transmitting control signals via an existing controller of the transit exchange.

24. (Previously presented) The method according to claim 19, further comprising:

initiating a connection after a request from another communication network by a program installed on a network server which is connected to another communication network.

25. (Previously presented) The method according to claim 24, wherein the another communication network is the Internet.

26. (Currently amended) An apparatus for switching a connection between subscribers of a communications network including a common signaling channel that carries a control signal for controlling a call function, information channels independent from the common signaling channel for carrying at least voice data, a transit exchange comprising at least one switching network and associated line trunk groups, the switching being effected at a request of an external communication network, the apparatus comprising:

two inputs corresponding to information channels of respective line trunk groups permanently connected to each other, thereby allocating the information channels to each other; and

a controller that transmits a control signal on the common signalling channel indicating that a connection to a first subscriber of the communications network is switched through a first information channel of the information channels and transmits a control signal on the common signalling channel indicating that a connection to a second subscriber of the communications network is switched through a second information channel of the information channels.

27. (Previously presented) The apparatus according to claim 26, wherein the controller employs ITU-T Signalling System No. 7.

28. (Previously presented) The apparatus according to claim 26, wherein the inputs are compatible with PCM30 transmission links.

29. (Previously presented) The apparatus according to claim 26, wherein the inputs are compatible with PCM24 transmission links.

30. (Previously presented) The apparatus according to claim 26, wherein the controller is an existing controller of the transit exchange.

31. (Previously presented) The apparatus according to claim 26, wherein the transit exchange is of an EWSD (Electronic World Wide Switching Device).

32. (Previously presented) The apparatus according to claim 31, wherein the inputs are connected by accesses for PCM lines.

33. (Previously presented) The apparatus according to claim 32, wherein the inputs are connected at one line trunk group.

34. (Previously presented) The apparatus according to claim 26, wherein the controller is connected to a network server which is connected to another communication network.

35. (Previously presented) The apparatus according to claim 34, wherein the another communication network is the internet.

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